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FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9658
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0195

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 000040

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/27/2020

TAGS: [PREL](#) [AU](#) [SU](#) [FR](#) [QA](#)

SUBJECT: FRENCH ENVOY EXPRESSES OPTIMISM, FRUSTRATION WITH
DARFUR TALKS

Classified By: CDA Mirembé L. Nantongo for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

(C) KEY POINTS

-- French Special Envoy for Sudan Issa Mauraut expressed frustration at the slow pace of the Darfur peace talks, but said he felt the overall peace process has made progress in that all factions are participating for the first time since the Abuja conference in 2004.

-- The French envoy also said that he could discern the development of a genuine civil society in Darfur.

(C) COMMENTS

-- S/E Mauraut has been resident in Doha, attached to the French embassy, since Qatar began its efforts to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis in Darfur,. We find his insights into the peace process to be credible.

End Key Points and Comments.

¶1. (C) In a January 26 conversation with Poloff Caudill, French Special Envoy for Sudan Issa Mauraut expressed his frustration at the slow pace of the Darfur peace talks. He said that representatives of factions in Darfur come to Doha and drag out the process, as if wanting to lengthen their stay in Doha for as long as possible. Nevertheless, he noted, there is now international consensus for the Doha process and "this is all we have."

¶2. (C) In spite of his frustration at the pace of the talks, Mauraut said that this round of the Doha talks had achieved something very significant: all of the various factions, including JEM and the Tripoli and Addis groups, were together at the same talks for the first time since the 2004 signing of the Abuja Protocol. He predicted slow progress during this round, and praised MFA Minister of State Ahmed Al Mahmoud for his persistence in seeking a solution to the Darfur crisis.

¶3. (C) The French Special Envoy also expressed his belief that the civil society conference hosted by Qatar on November 18 had yielded slight but perceptible progress. He noted that all of the Darfur groups have their own "civil society" proxies and argued for their inclusion in the process, but that he could discern the development of a truly independent civil society voice in Darfur.
Nantongo